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**General Lyles**

## September 11: We can all stand against hate

*by Gen Lester L. Lyles, Commander, Air Force Materiel Command*

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio — The unthinkable happened Sept. 11 - a tragedy of such huge proportion that it cannot be fully understood. Air Force Materiel Command people, like the rest of our nation, asked why.

We may never know the full extent of what motivated such acts of terrorism, but we do know the United States became the victim of the ultimate hate crime that day. Even as an African-American youth who came of age during the Civil Rights Movement and the tumultuous Sixties in our nation's capitol, I have no reference point for hate acted out on such a massive, deadly scale. Like most of you, I cannot really grasp hatred so deep and so vicious as we Americans now have experienced.

Since the Sept. 11 attack, we have seen an increase in harassment, slurs, and intimidation because of how people dress, how they look, and the religion they might practice.

The Air Force has a policy of zero tolerance for discriminatory treatment in any form, including against individuals of Arab-American, Middle Eastern, or Muslim descent. Service members who violate this policy are subject to action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and civilian employees are subject to administrative and disciplinary actions.

Commanders have been urged at all levels to remain vigilant and take prompt, appropriate action with members of their commands who fail to meet these Air Force standards.

However, what I really want, and most hope, is that all of us will speak against discrimination, harassment, and any other manifestation of this kind of hate that is so fundamentally in opposition to American ideals.

Choose to be the kind of people for which this republic stands: "ONE NATION, UNDER GOD, WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL." @